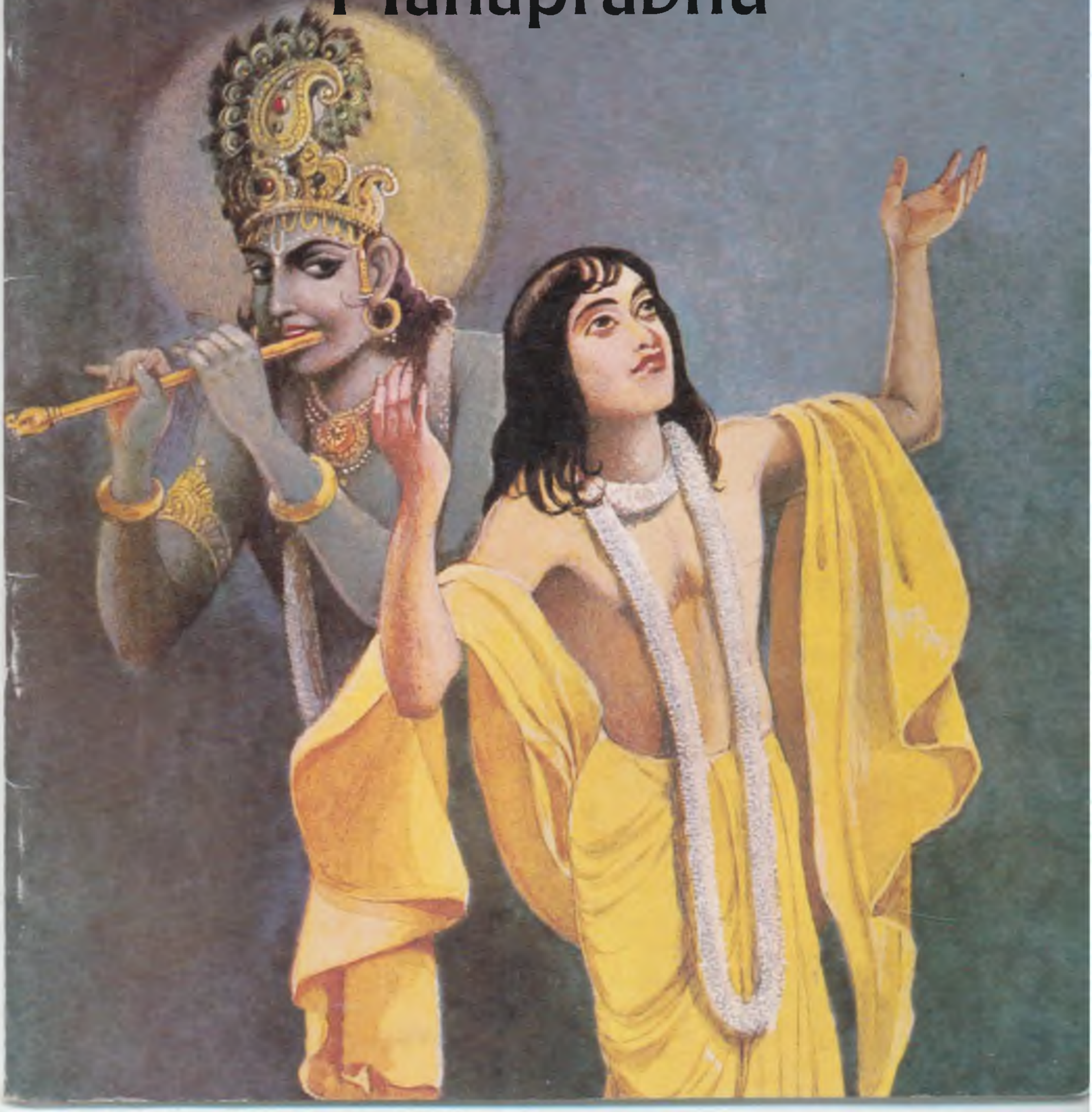
AMAR CHITRA KATHA

NO. 611 RS. 30

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu



Illustrated Classics From India

Over 86 million copies of over 400 titles sold worldwide!

Amar Chitra Katha is a collection of illustrated classics that retell stories from Indian mythology, history, folktale and legend through the fascinating medium of comics. Over 430 stories from all over India have been told in this series that has been endorsed by educationists and recommended by teachers the world over.

Through a masterful blend of commentary, dialogue and illustration, Amar Chitra Katha presents complex historical facts and intricate mythology in a format that would appeal to children. They not only entertain, but also provide a fitting introduction to the cultural heritage of India. In a country so vast and varied, the series also serves as a medium for national integration, by introducing young readers to the rich cultural diversity of the country and highlighting the achievements of local heroes.

Amar Chitra Katha comics are like family heirlooms, passed down from generation to generation. These timeless illustrated classics are now also available online on www.AmarChitraKatha.com. Start your own collection today!

No. 631 • Rs 30

INDIA BOOK HOUSE

Mahalaxmi Chambers, 5th Floor, 22 Bhulabhai Desai Road, Mumbai 400 026, India.

 Reprinted: July 2005 ISBN: 81-7508-059-0
Printed at Kashyap Graphic, C-64 Akurli Industrial Estate,
Akurli Road, Kandivli (East), Mumbai-400 101.

CHAITANYA MAHAPRABHU



IT WAS THE NIGHT OF THE LUNAR ECLIPSE IN FEBRUARY 1486. THE PEOPLE OF NABADWIP, A CENTRE OF LEARNING, ON THE BANKS OF THE GANGA, HAD GATHERED AT THE SACRED RIVER FOR THE RITUAL BATH. AS THE CHANTS OF "HARI" FILLED THE AIR, A CHILD WAS BORN IN THE HOUSE OF JAGANNATH MISHRA.



JAGANNATH MISHRA WAS A GREAT SCHOLAR. HE LIVED AT NABADWIP WITH SHACHI DEVI, HIS WIFE AND VISHWAROOP, HIS ONLY SURVIVING SON.



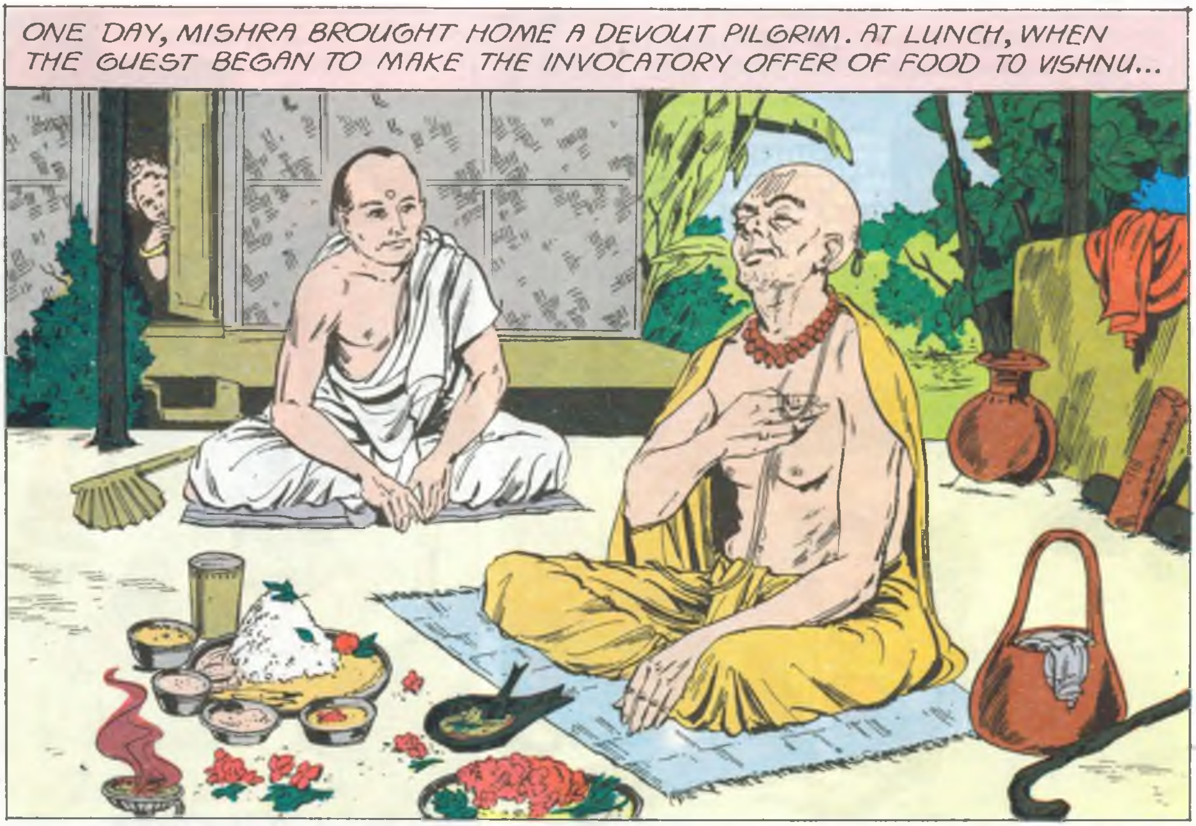
JAGANNATH RUSHED TO HIS HUMBLE HUT WHERE HE TAUGHT THE VILLAGE BOYS.



* OF BITTER TASTE.



* ANOTHER NAME FOR VISHNU. # SAY HARI.


ONE DAY, MISHRA BROUGHT HOME A DEVOUT PILGRIM. AT LUNCH, WHEN THE GUEST BEGAN TO MAKE THE INVOCATORY OFFER OF FOOD TO VISHNU...

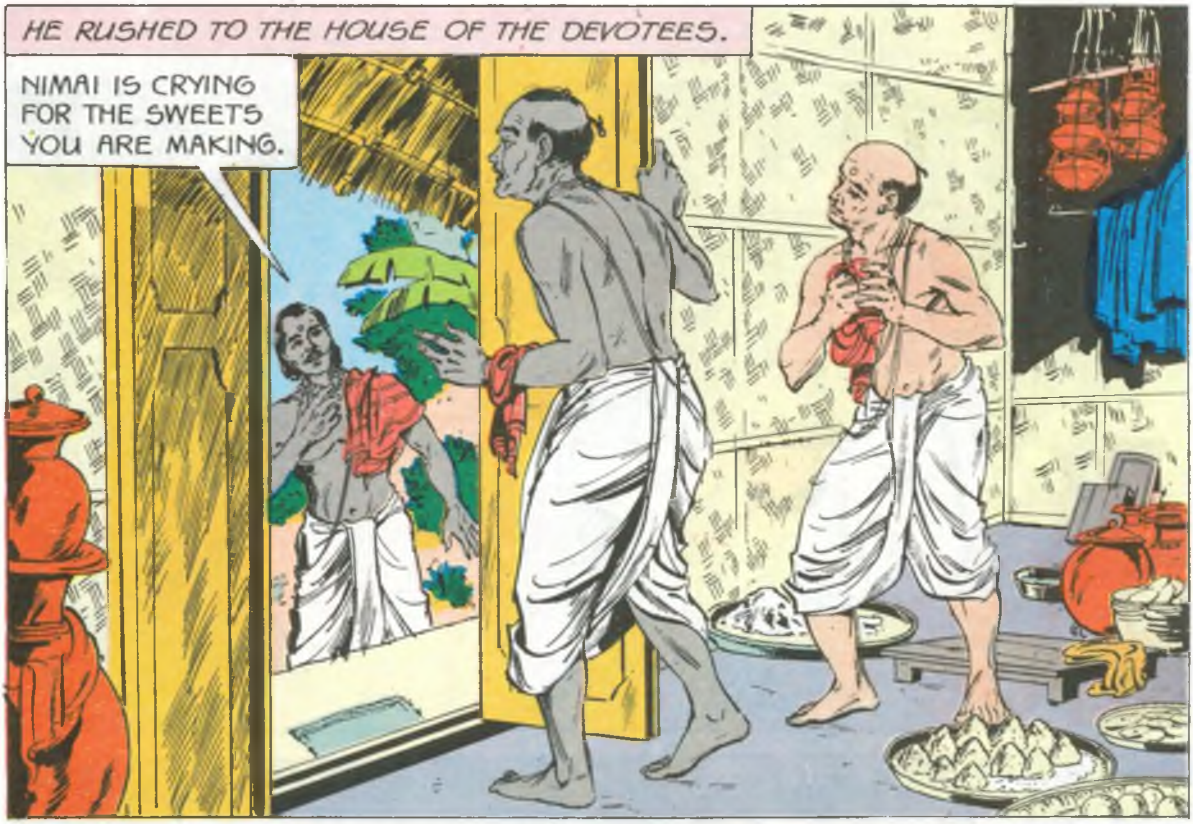

...NIMAI BEGAN TO EAT IT.
SHACHI! TAKE THIS LITTLE DEVIL AWAY.


SINCE LEFT-OVERS SHOULD NOT BE OFFERED TO A DEITY, THE BRAHMAN HAD TO COOK AFRESH.
BUT, ONCE AGAIN, NIMAI BEGAN TO EAT IT BEFORE THE INVOCATORY OFFER WAS COMPLETED.
WHEN IT HAPPENED FOR THE THIRD TIME, HOWEVER—
I WILL TEACH YOU TO STOP THIS MISCHIEF.
PLEASE CONTROL YOUR ANGER. HE IS JUST AN INFANT.


SEVERAL DAYS LATER, HIRANYA AND JAGADISHA, TWO DEVOTEES OF VISHNU, WERE COOKING FOOD TO OFFER TO HIM.

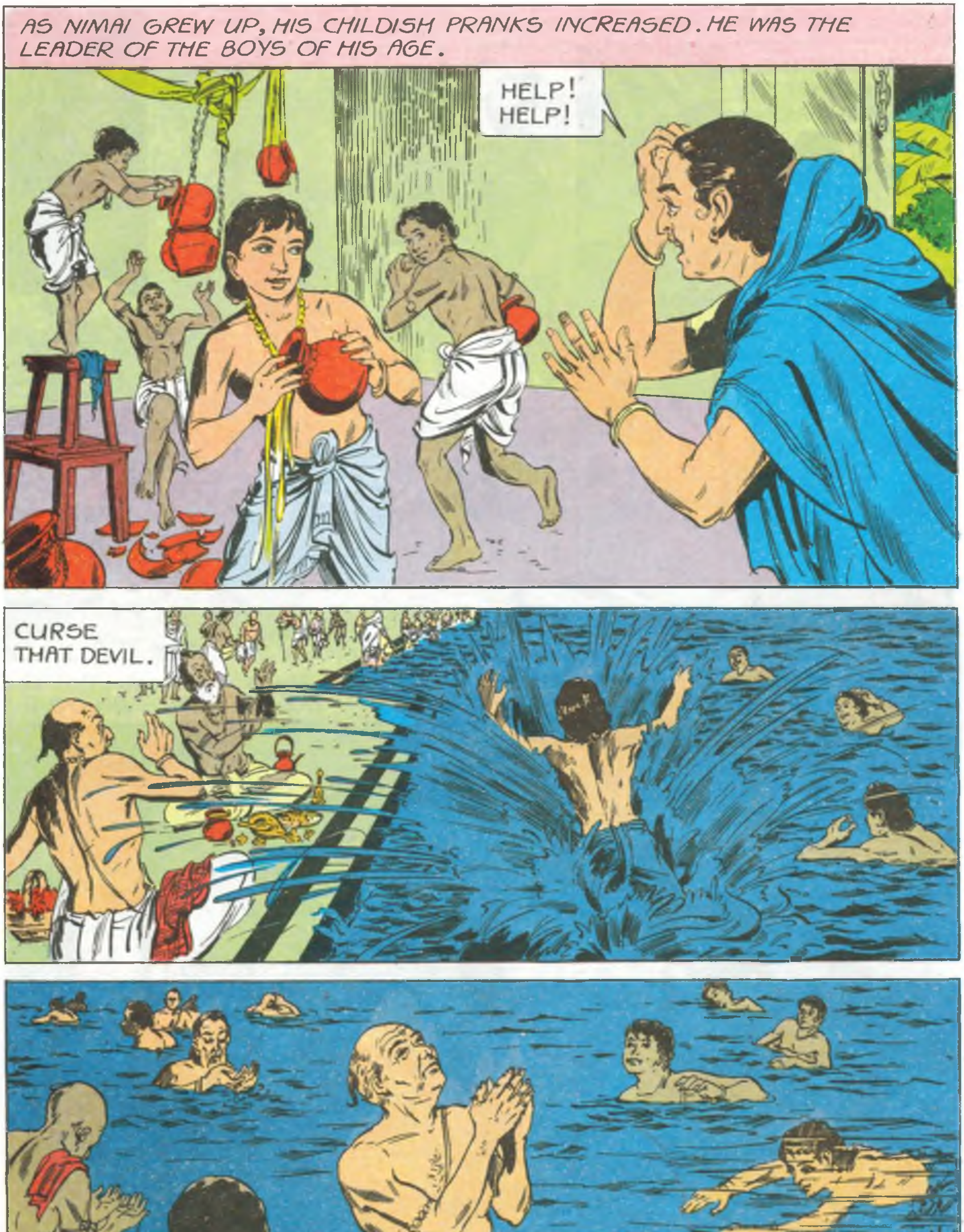

A LITTLE DISTANCE AWAY IN JAGANNATH MISHRA'S HOUSE –
WHY IS HE CRYING? WHAT DOES HE WANT?
I DON'T KNOW. I'M TRYING TO FIND OUT.
UH...UH... HIRANYA UH...AND... UH... JAGDISH...

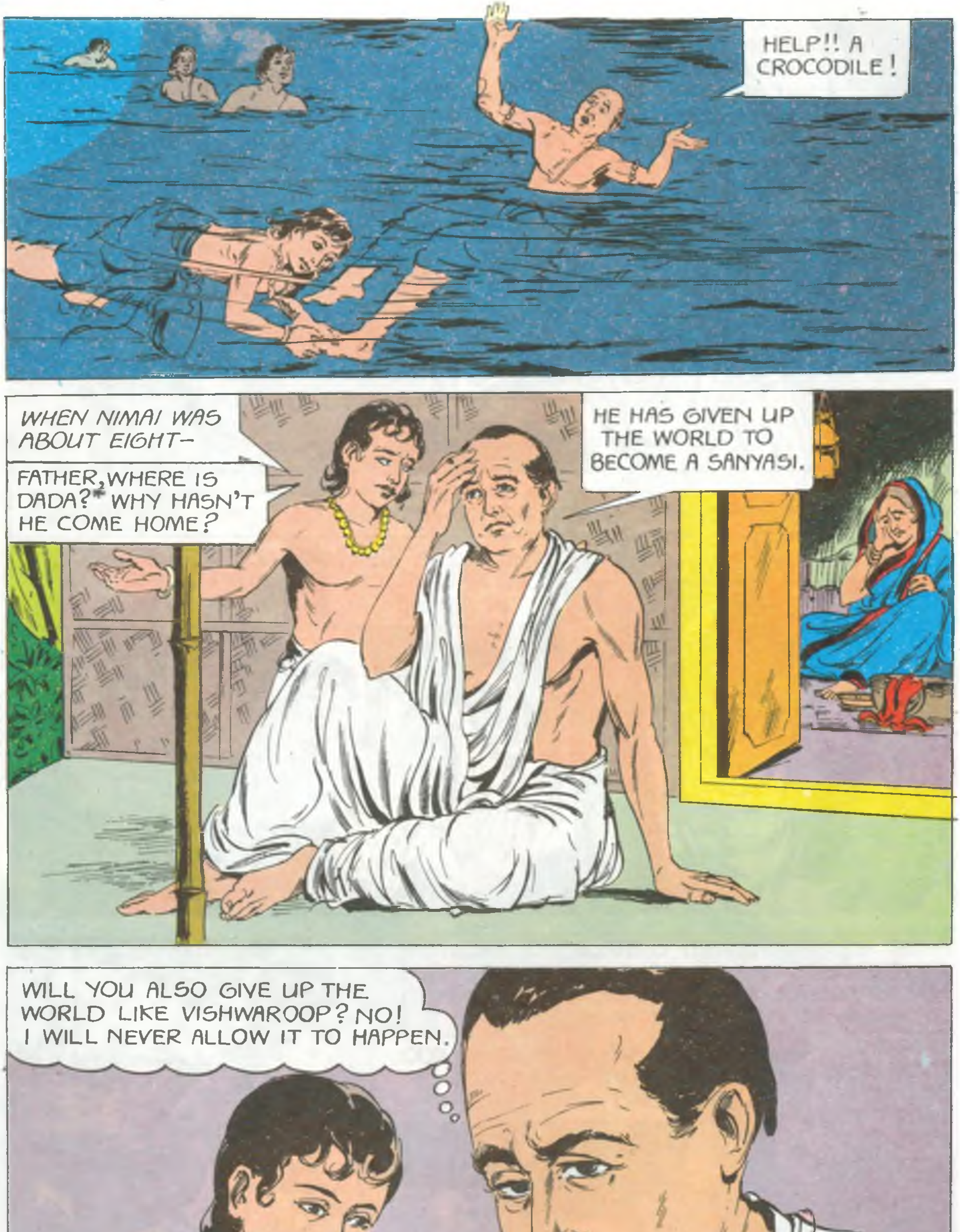

BY THEN ALL THE NEIGHBOURS HAD COLLECTED OUTSIDE MISHRA'S HOUSE.
...THEY ARE MAKING SWEETS FOR LORD VISHNU! I WANT TO EAT THEM.
IMPOSSIBLE!
I'LL GO AND SEE IF THEY REALLY ARE MAKING SWEETS.


HE RUSHED TO THE HOUSE OF THE DEVOTEES.
NIMAI IS CRYING FOR THE SWEETS YOU ARE MAKING.

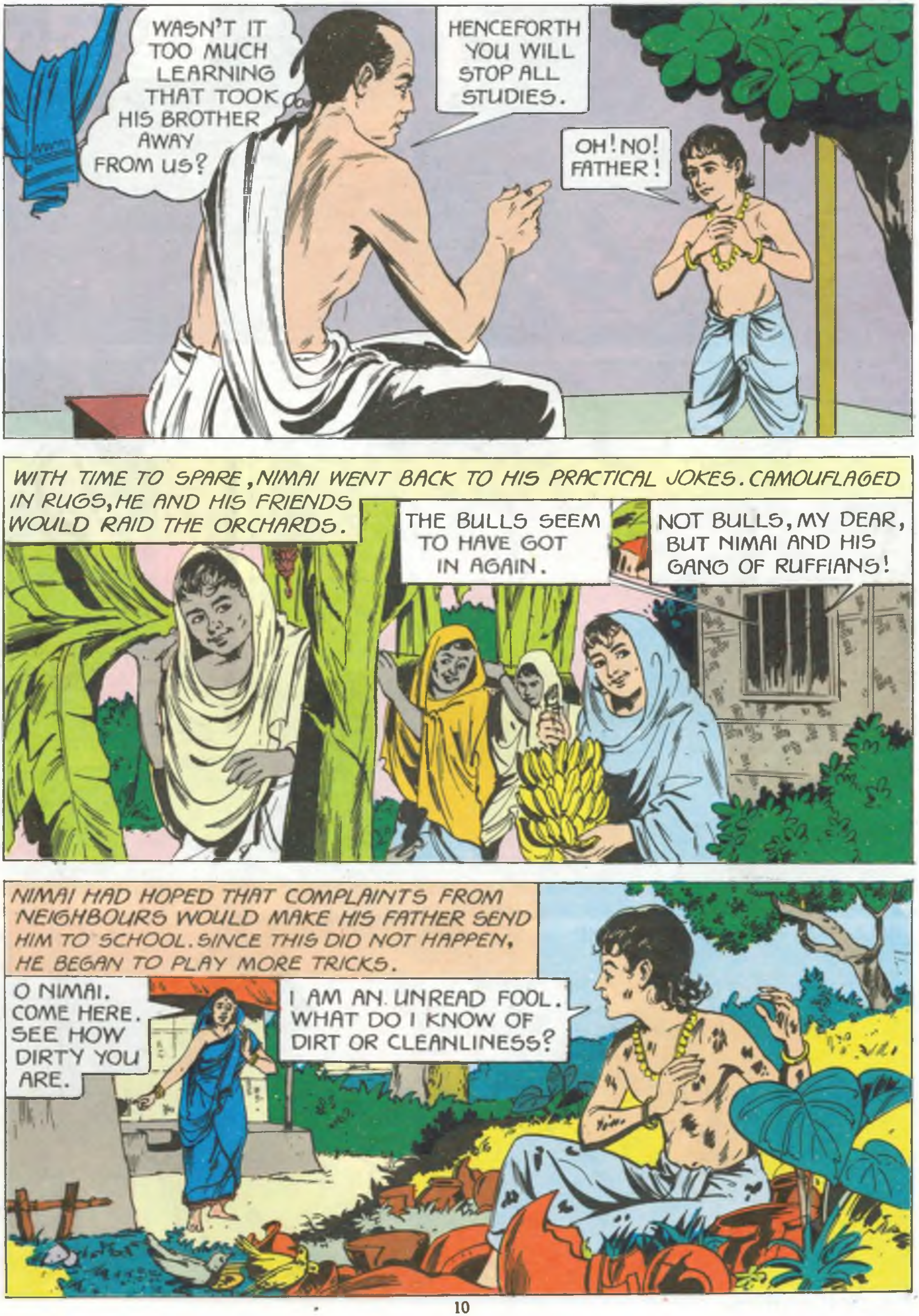

HIRANYA WAS ASTONISHED. BUT NOT JAGDISHA.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN ? HOW DID HE KNOW?
HE IS NO ORDINARY CHILD. LET US GO TO HIM.


THEY CARRIED THE OFFERINGS ALONG WITH THEM.
HERE, NIMAI, COME ! THIS IS FOR YOU.


AS NIMAI GREW UP, HIS CHILDISH PRANKS INCREASED. HE WAS THE LEADER OF THE BOYS OF HIS AGE.
HELP! HELP!
CURSE THAT DEVIL.

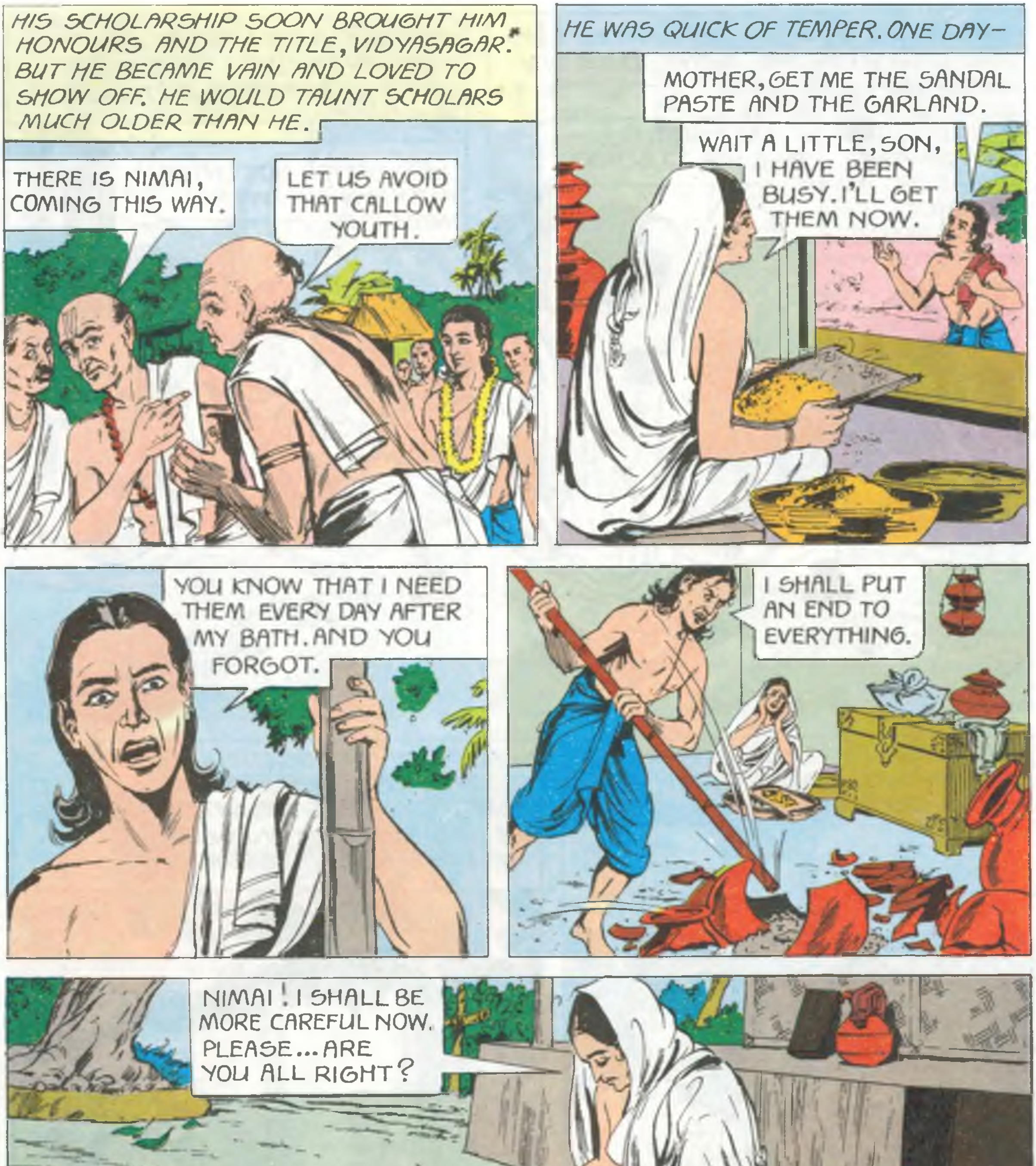


* ELDER BROTHER.

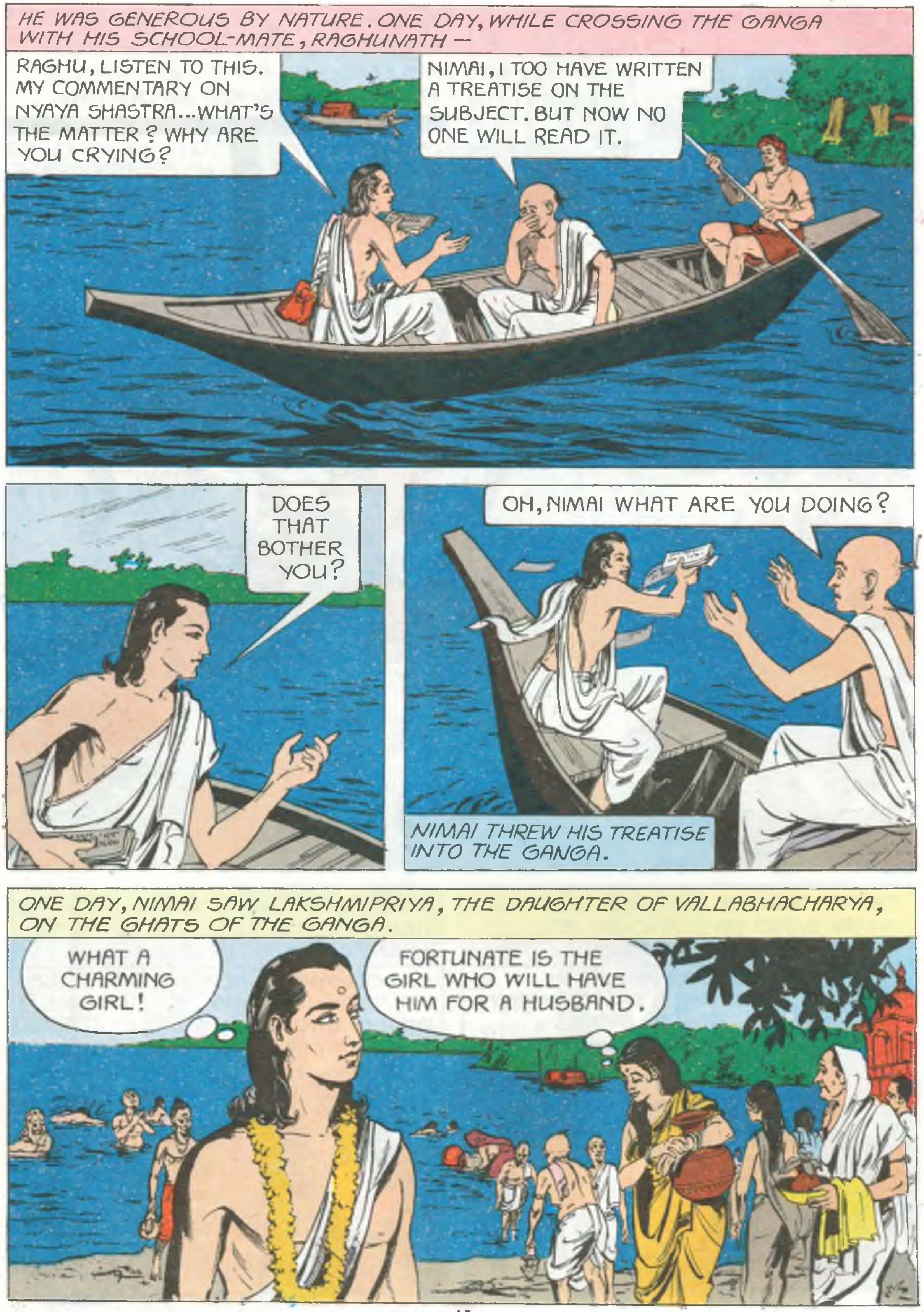


WASN'T IT TOO MUCH LEARNING THAT TOOK HIS BROTHER AWAY FROM US?
HENCEFORTH YOU WILL STOP ALL STUDIES.
OH! NO! FATHER!
WITH TIME TO SPARE, NIMAI WENT BACK TO HIS PRACTICAL JOKES. CAMOUFLAGED IN RUGS, HE AND HIS FRIENDS WOULD RAID THE ORCHARDS.
THE BULLS SEEM TO HAVE GOT IN AGAIN.
NOT BULLS, MY DEAR, BUT NIMAI AND HIS GANG OF RUFFIANS!
NIMAI HAD HOPED THAT COMPLAINTS FROM NEIGHBOURS WOULD MAKE HIS FATHER SEND HIM TO SCHOOL. SINCE THIS DID NOT HAPPEN, HE BEGAN TO PLAY MORE TRICKS.
O NIMAI. COME HERE. SEE HOW DIRTY YOU ARE.
I AM AN UNREAD FOOL. WHAT DO I KNOW OF DIRT OR CLEANLINESS?


SHACHI DEVI UNDERSTOOD WHAT HE WAS DRIVING AT. SHE WENT TO JAGANNATH MISHRA.
IF WE ARE TO SAVE NIMAI, WE MUST SEND HIM TO SCHOOL IMMEDIATELY.
IF YOU INSIST, I'LL TAKE HIM TO SCHOOL.
NIMAI WAS A BRILLIANT STUDENT AND SOON MASTERED ALL THERE WAS TO LEARN IN GRAMMAR, RHETORIC AND PHILOSOPHY.
WE'D BETTER NOT ENTER INTO ANY ARGUMENT WITH HIM.
SUDDENLY ONE DAY, JAGANNATH MISHRA DIED. NIMAI WAS TEN YEARS OLD.
WHO WILL TAKE CARE OF ME NOW?
I WILL, MOTHER!! PLEASE DON'T CRY.
SHACHI DEVI NOW DEVOTED HERSELF TO THE SERVICE OF HER SON. NIMAI WORKED HARD, COMPLETED HIS STUDIES BEFORE HE WAS EIGHTEEN AND STARTED HIS CAREER AS A TEACHER.



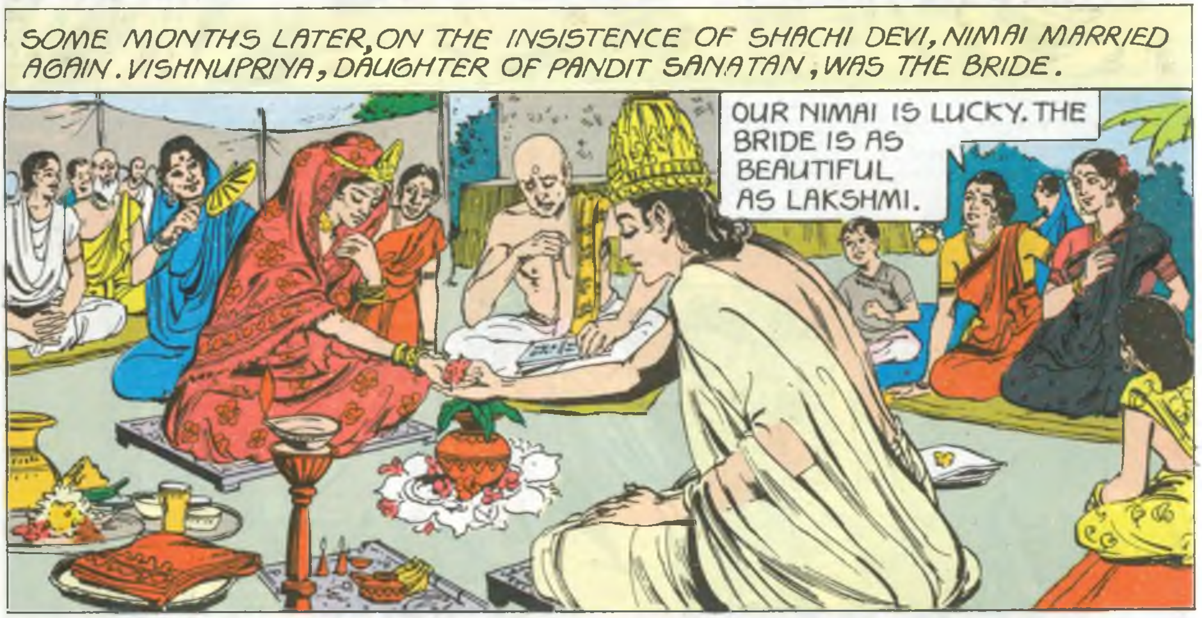
* OCEAN OF LEARNING.

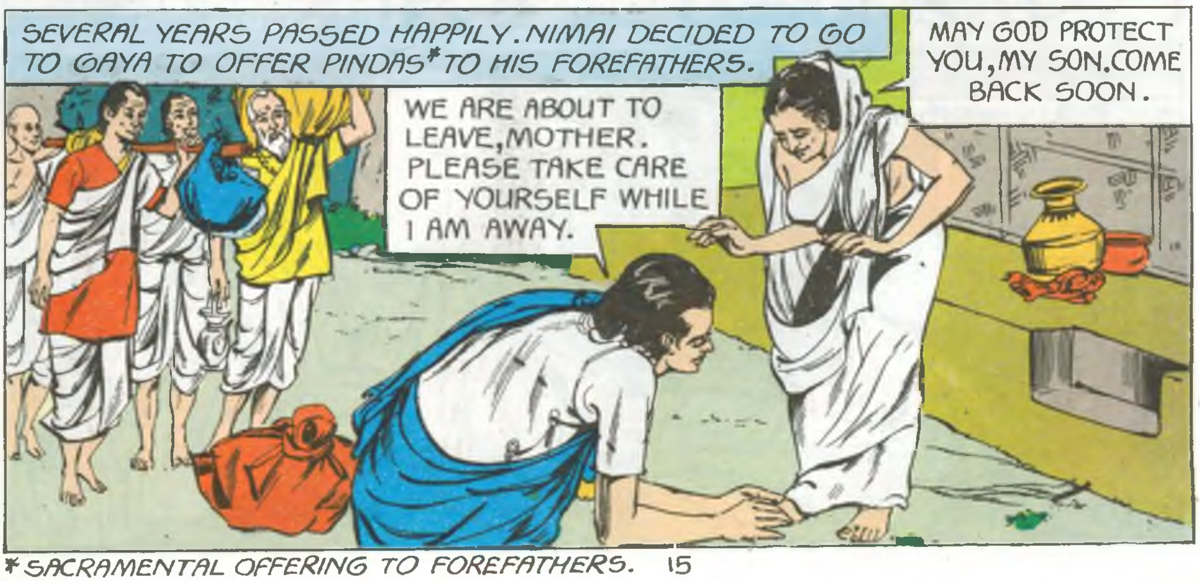


HE WAS GENEROUS BY NATURE. ONE DAY, WHILE CROSSING THE GANGA WITH HIS SCHOOL-MATE, RAGHUNATH —
RAGHU, LISTEN TO THIS. MY COMMENTARY ON NYAYA SHASTRA...WHAT'S THE MATTER ? WHY ARE YOU CRYING?
NIMAI, I TOO HAVE WRITTEN A TREATISE ON THE SUBJECT. BUT NOW NO ONE WILL READ IT.
DOES THAT BOTHER YOU?
OH, NIMAI WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
NIMAI THREW HIS TREATISE INTO THE GANGA.
ONE DAY, NIMAI SAW LAKSHMIPRIYA, THE DAUGHTER OF VALLABHACHARYA, ON THE GHATS OF THE GANGA.
WHAT A CHARMING GIRL!
FORTUNATE IS THE GIRL WHO WILL HAVE HIM FOR A HUSBAND.

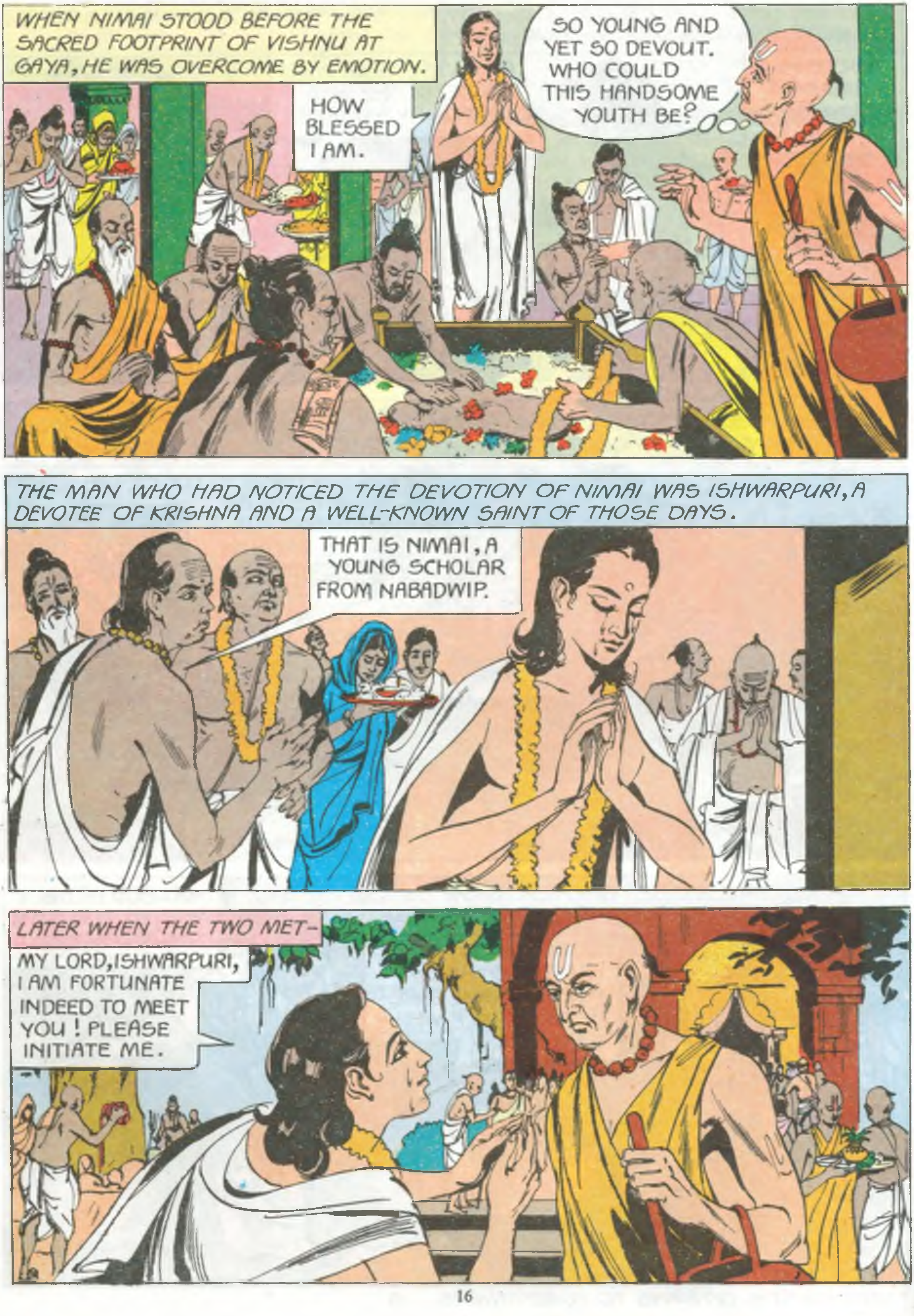

THEIR WEDDING WAS ARRANGED SOON AFTER.
NIMAI WAS NOW A SCHOLAR OF REPUTE. ONE DAY, HE WAS HOLDING HIS CLASS BY THE GANGA, WHEN A PALANQUIN STOPPED BEFORE HIM.
I AM KESHAV KASHMIRI. I HAVE COME HERE TO CONFRONT AND CHALLENGE THE PANDITS OF NABADWIP.
YOU HAVE HONOURED US GREATLY. PLEASE COMPOSE A HYMN TO THE GANGA HERE AND NOW TO CHEER OUR FLAGGING SPIRITS.
KESHAV AGREED. HE COMPOSED THE HYMN IN NO TIME AND RECITED IT. NIMAI HEARD HIM OUT PATIENTLY. THEN–
IF YOU PERMIT ME, I HAVE A FEW COMMENTS TO MAKE.
HE POINTED OUT, LINE BY LINE, WORD BY WORD, ALL ITS DEFECTS. KESHAV WAS STUNNED.
MY GOD! WHAT A MEMORY! LET ME GO AND SAVE WHAT IS STILL LEFT OF MY REPUTATION.
I AM SORRY IF I HAVE DISTURBED YOU. I DID NOT MEAN TO.

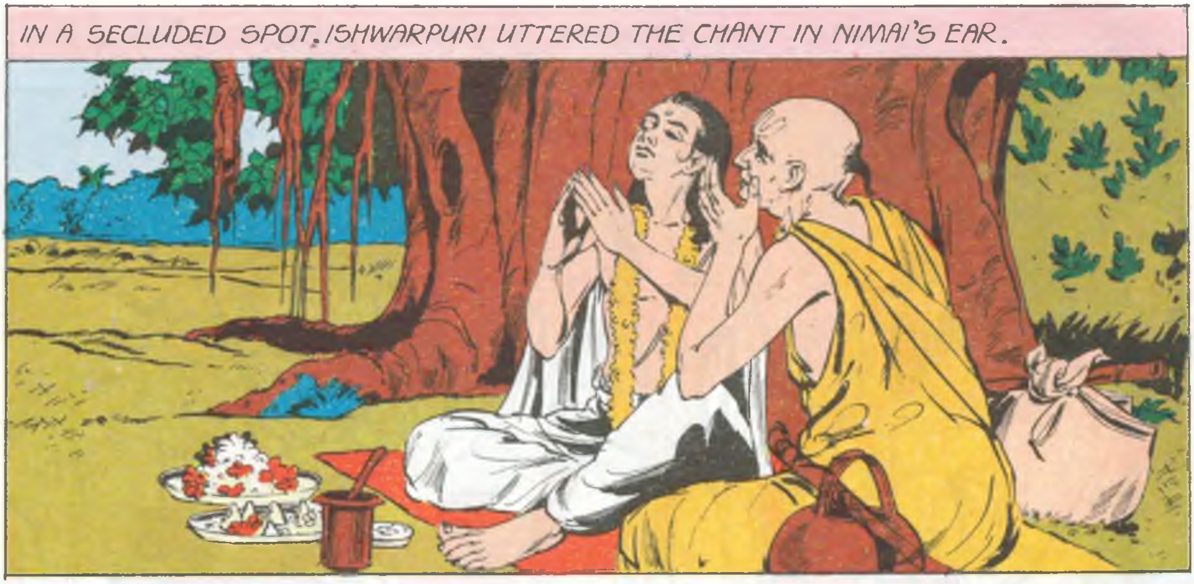






*SACRAMENTAL OFFERING TO FOREFATHERS.


WHEN NIMAI STOOD BEFORE THE SACRED FOOTPRINT OF VISHNU AT GAYA, HE WAS OVERCOME BY EMOTION.
HOW BLESSED I AM.
SO YOUNG AND YET SO DEVOUT. WHO COULD THIS HANDSOME YOUTH BE?
THE MAN WHO HAD NOTICED THE DEVOTION OF NIMAI WAS ISHWARPURI, A DEVOTEE OF KRISHNA AND A WELL-KNOWN SAINT OF THOSE DAYS.
THAT IS NIMAI, A YOUNG SCHOLAR FROM NABADWIP.
LATER WHEN THE TWO MET-
MY LORD, ISHWARPURI, I AM FORTUNATE INDEED TO MEET YOU! PLEASE INITIATE ME.


IN A SECLUDED SPOT, ISHWARPURI UTTERED THE CHANT IN NIMAI'S EAR.


NIMAI RETURNED HOME, A DIFFERENT MAN.
WHATEVER HAS HAPPENED TO HIM?
NONE OF THE OLD CONCEIT.


THERE, HE IS OFF AGAIN.
WE ARE JUST WASTING OUR TIME COMING HERE.
KRISHNA! KRISHNA!

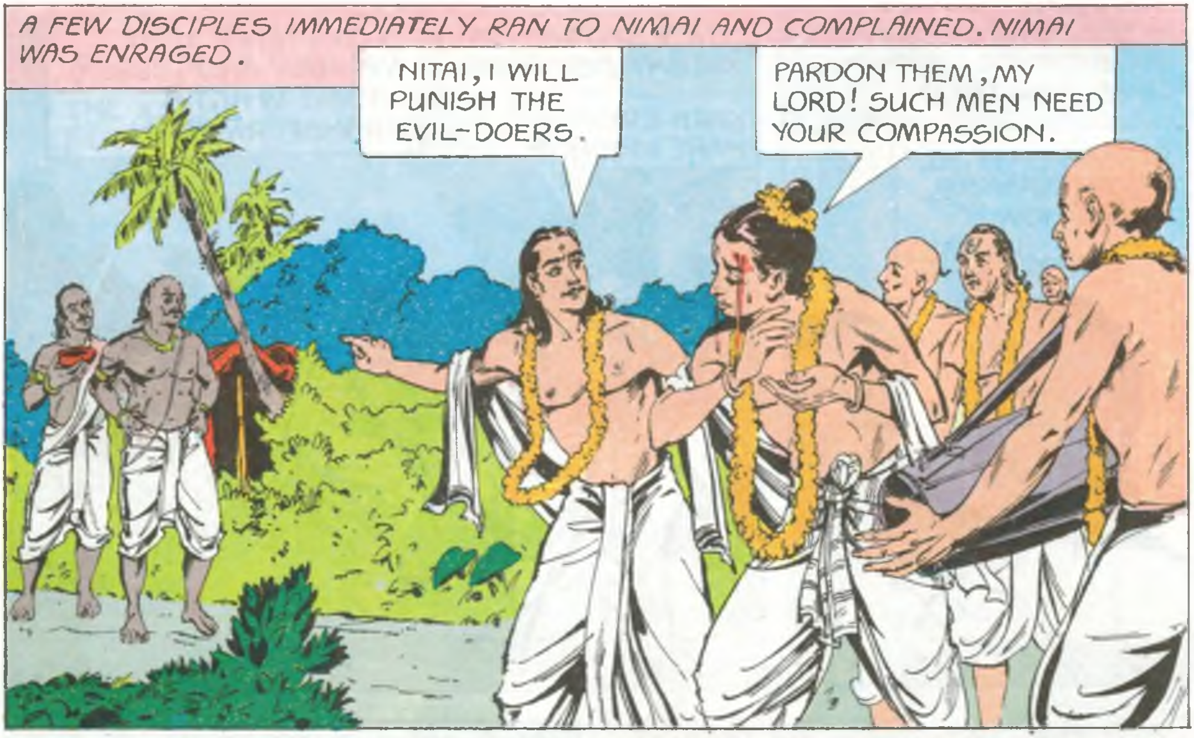


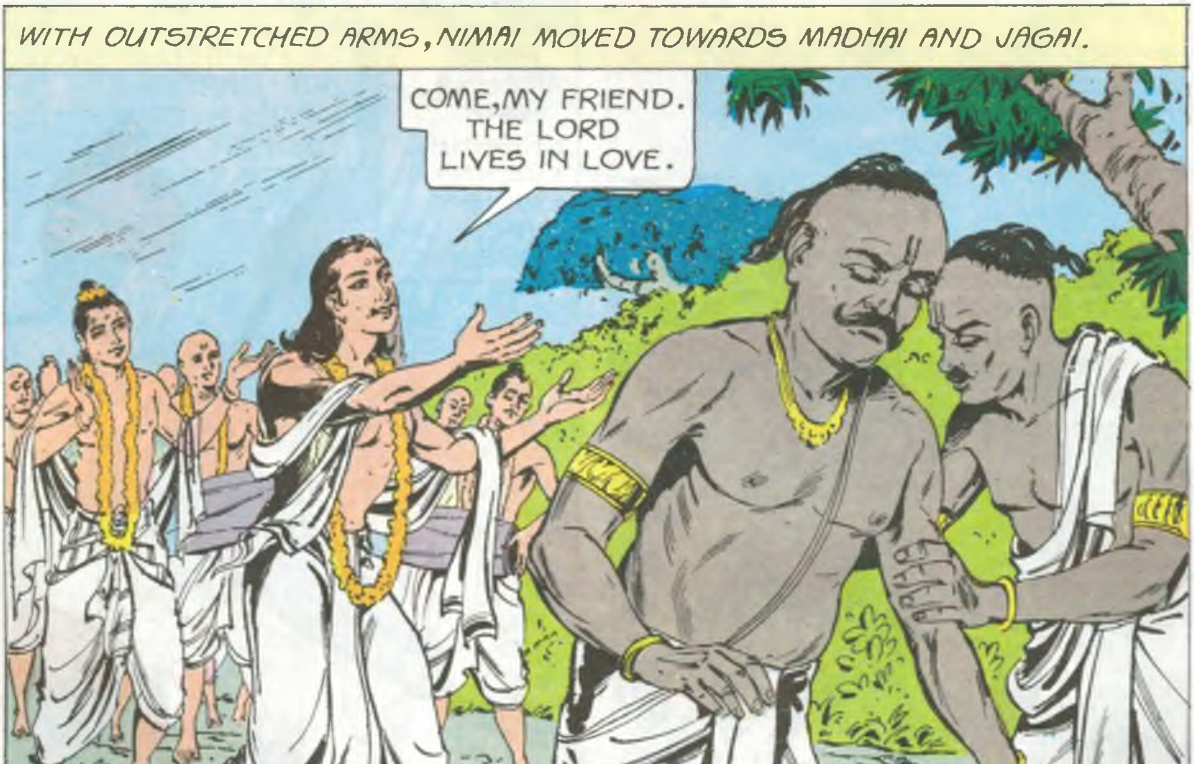
*RELIGIOUS DISCOURSES, DURING WHICH DEVOTIONAL SONGS ARE SUNG.


CAME NITYANANDA FROM THE SOUTH.
MY LORD! YOU BECKONED. I CAME.
WHY WERE YOU SO LONG IN COMING, NITAI?


PARDON ME, NIMAI. I WILL NEVER PART FROM YOU.

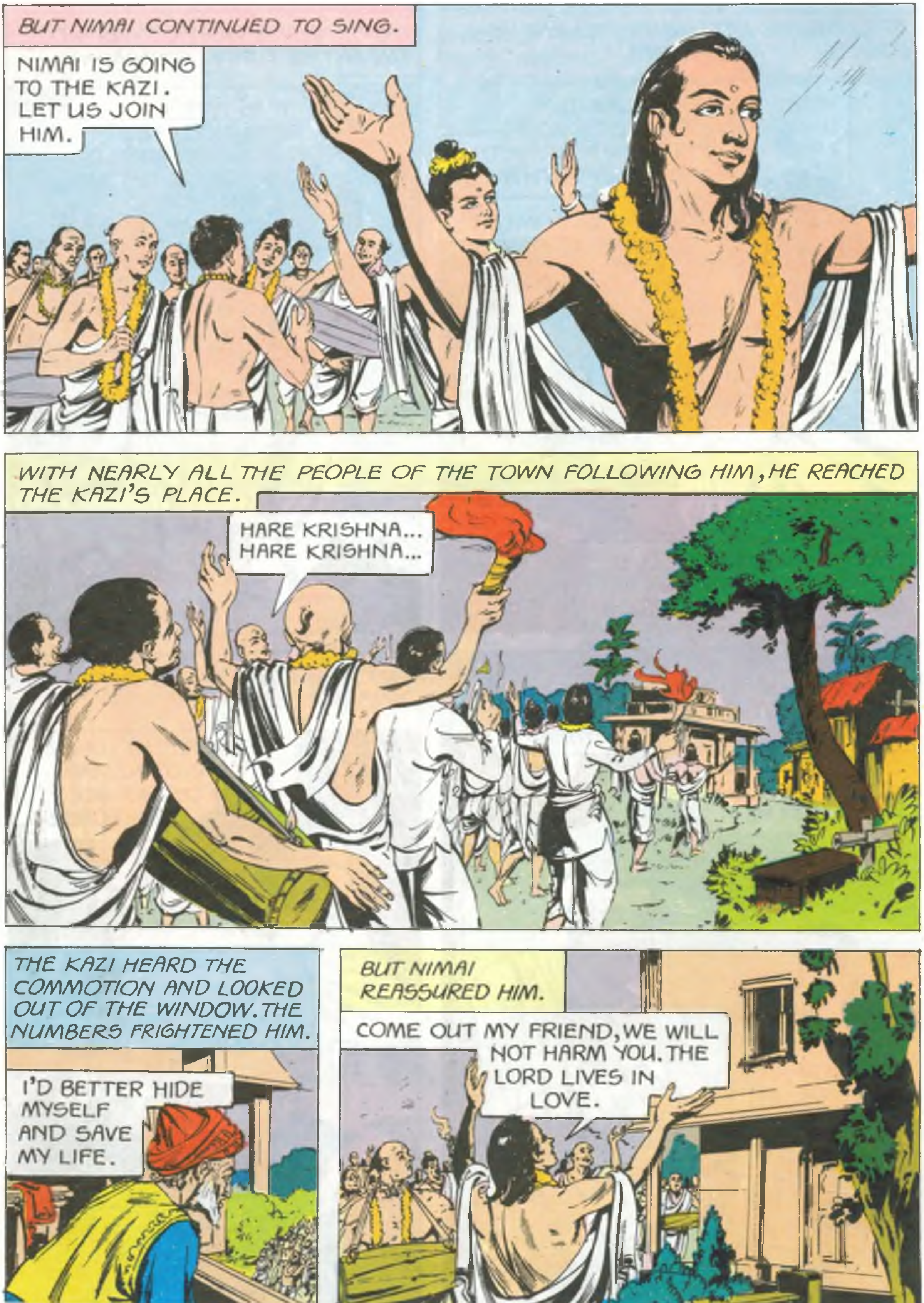

THE FOLLOWERS OF NIMAI GREW IN NUMBER.
HARE KRISHNA HARE KRISHNA...
AT THAT TIME THERE LIVED IN NABADWIP TWO NOTORIOUS BRAHMAN BROTHERS— JAGAI AND MADHAI.
HARE KRISHNA... HARE KRISHNA...
THEY'RE AT IT AGAIN. LET'S STOP THEM.
FULLY INTOXICATED, THEY STAGGERED OUT INTO THE STREET. MADHAI FLUNG HIS WINE CUP AT NITAI.
THERE! THAT SHOULD SILENCE YOU FOREVER.
KRISHNA KRISHNA HARE HARE...


A FEW DISCIPLES IMMEDIATELY RAN TO NIMAI AND COMPLAINED. NIMAI WAS ENRAGED.
NITAI, I WILL PUNISH THE EVIL-DOERS.
PARDON THEM, MY LORD! SUCH MEN NEED YOUR COMPASSION.

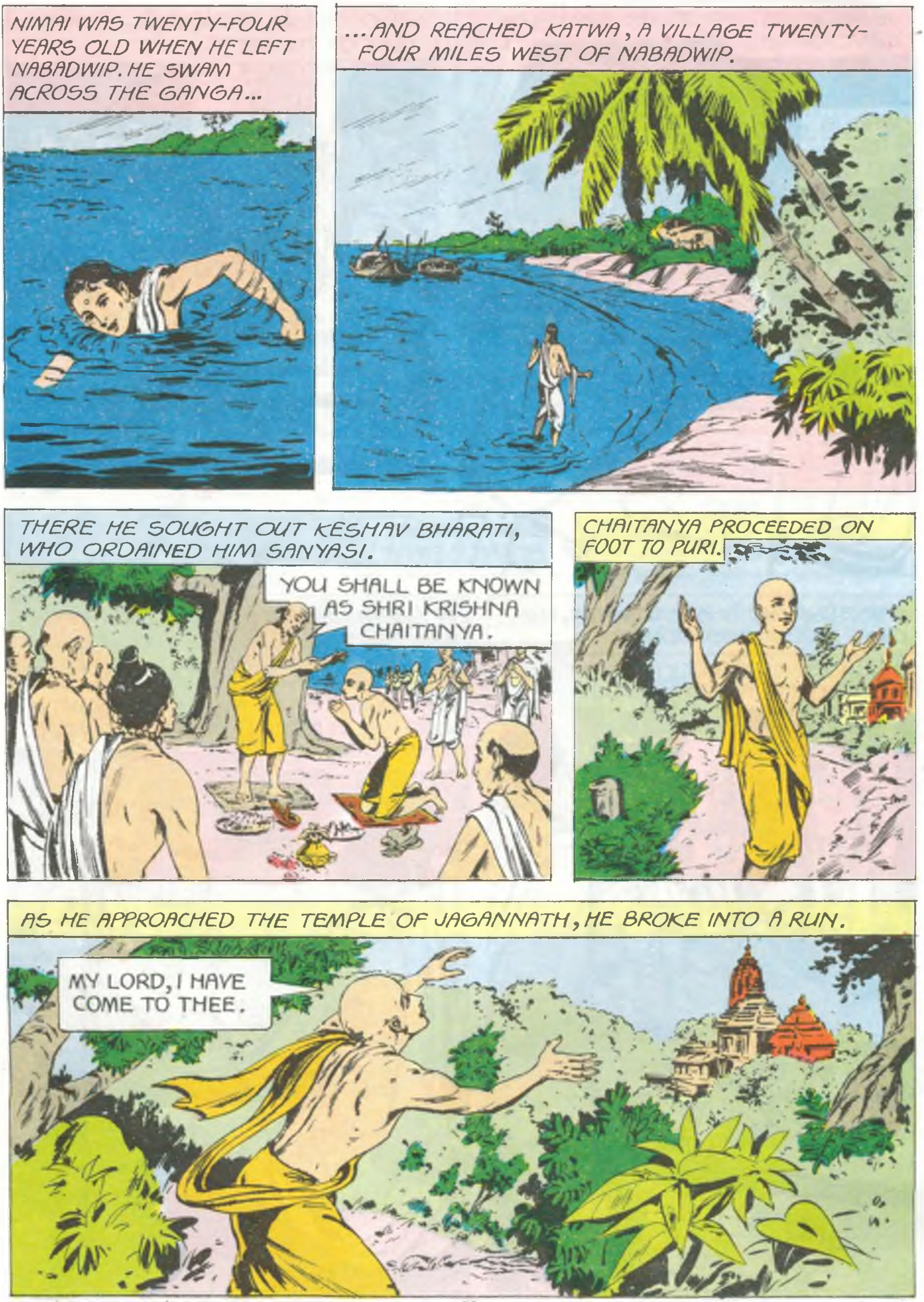

WITH OUTSTRETCHED ARMS, NIMAI MOVED TOWARDS MADHAI AND JAGAI.
COME, MY FRIEND. THE LORD LIVES IN LOVE.



* KIRTANS HELD ON THE STREETS.

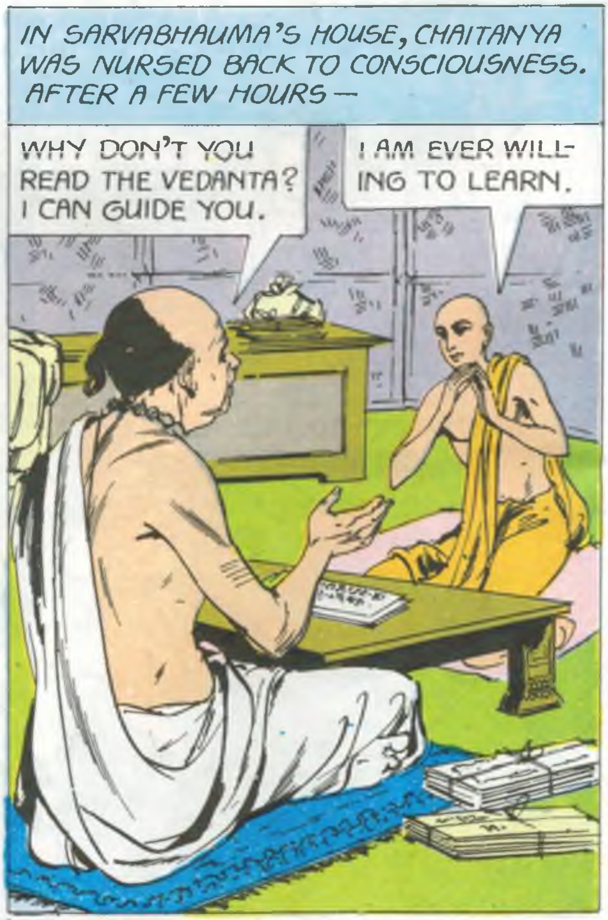

BUT NIMAI CONTINUED TO SING.
NIMAI IS GOING TO THE KAZI. LET US JOIN HIM.
WITH NEARLY ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE TOWN FOLLOWING HIM, HE REACHED THE KAZI'S PLACE.
HARE KRISHNA... HARE KRISHNA...
THE KAZI HEARD THE COMMOTION AND LOOKED OUT OF THE WINDOW. THE NUMBERS FRIGHTENED HIM.
I'D BETTER HIDE MYSELF AND SAVE MY LIFE.
BUT NIMAI REASSURED HIM.
COME OUT MY FRIEND, WE WILL NOT HARM YOU. THE LORD LIVES IN LOVE.

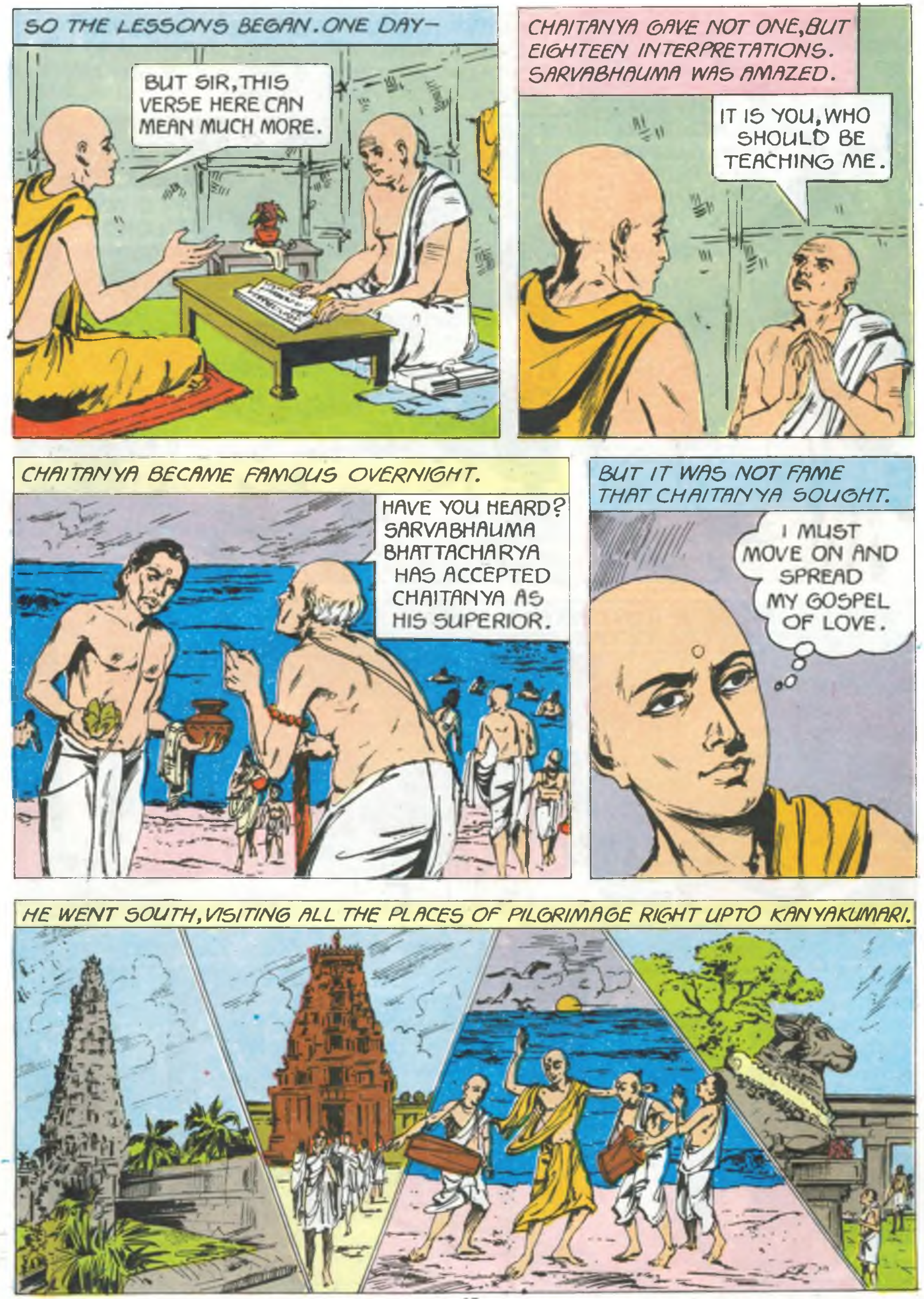

AT LAST, THE KAZI GATHERED ENOUGH COURAGE TO MEET NIMAI.
WHAT YOU HAVE DONE IS UNWORTHY OF A JUST RULER. I REQUEST YOU TO WITHDRAW THE ORDER FORTHWITH.
I WILL! I WILL!
LATER NIMAI HAD DISCUSSIONS WITH THE KAZI ON THE KORAN AND THE VEDAS.
NIMAI HAD BY NOW CONVERTED THE ENTIRE TOWN OF NABADWIP.
IT IS TIME I RENOUNCED THE WORLD AND CARRIED MY GOSPEL BEYOND THIS TOWN.
HE APPROACHED HIS MOTHER AND SPOKE TO HER OF HIS INTENTION. SHACHI DEVI WAS SILENT FOR A MOMENT, HER EYES OVERFLOWING WITH TEARS. THEN—
IF THIS BE GOD'S WILL, LET IT BE DONE.
NEXT, HE WENT TO HIS WIFE. SHE WAS FAST ASLEEP.
FORGIVE ME, DEAR. I CANNOT REMAIN A HOUSEHOLDER ANY LONGER.

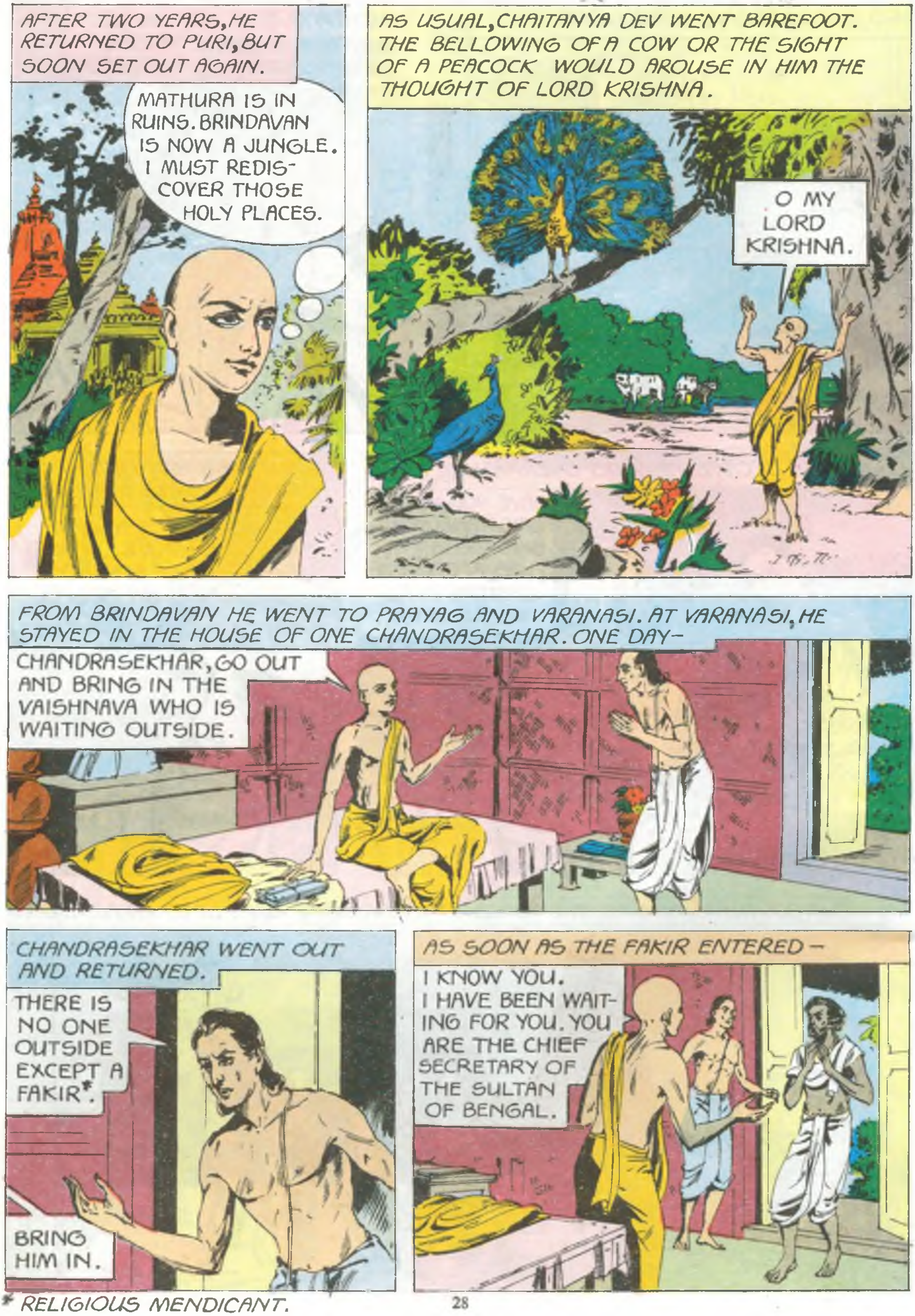

NIMAI WAS TWENTY-FOUR YEARS OLD WHEN HE LEFT NABADWIP. HE SWAM ACROSS THE GANGA...
...AND REACHED KATWA, A VILLAGE TWENTY-FOUR MILES WEST OF NABADWIP.
THERE HE SOUGHT OUT KESHAV BHARATI, WHO ORDAINED HIM SANYASI.
YOU SHALL BE KNOWN AS SHRI KRISHNA CHAITANYA.
CHAITANYA PROCEEDED ON FOOT TO PURI.
AS HE APPROACHED THE TEMPLE OF JAGANNATH, HE BROKE INTO A RUN.
MY LORD, I HAVE COME TO THEE.


HE MADE HIS WAY TO THE SANCTUM SANCTORUM...
WHO IS THIS FELLOW?
HOW DARE HE?

...AND FELL,UNCONSCIOUS, AT THE FEET OF THE DEITY.

SARVABHAUMA BHATTACHARYA,THE CHIEF PRIEST,WAS MOVED.
SUCH ECSTASY IN ONE SO YOUNG! TAKE HIM TO MY HOUSE.

IN SARVABHAUMA'S HOUSE, CHAITANYA WAS NURSED BACK TO CONSCIOUSNESS. AFTER A FEW HOURS—
WHY DON'T YOU READ THE VEDANTA? I CAN GUIDE YOU.
I AM EVER WILLING TO LEARN.


SO THE LESSONS BEGAN. ONE DAY—
BUT SIR, THIS VERSE HERE CAN MEAN MUCH MORE.
CHAITANYA GAVE NOT ONE, BUT EIGHTEEN INTERPRETATIONS. SARVABHAUMA WAS AMAZED.
IT IS YOU, WHO SHOULD BE TEACHING ME.
CHAITANYA BECAME FAMOUS OVERNIGHT.
HAVE YOU HEARD? SARVABHAUMA BHATTACHARYA HAS ACCEPTED CHAITANYA AS HIS SUPERIOR.
BUT IT WAS NOT FAME THAT CHAITANYA SOUGHT.
I MUST MOVE ON AND SPREAD MY GOSPEL OF LOVE.
HE WENT SOUTH, VISITING ALL THE PLACES OF PILGRIMAGE RIGHT UPTO KANYAKUMARI.

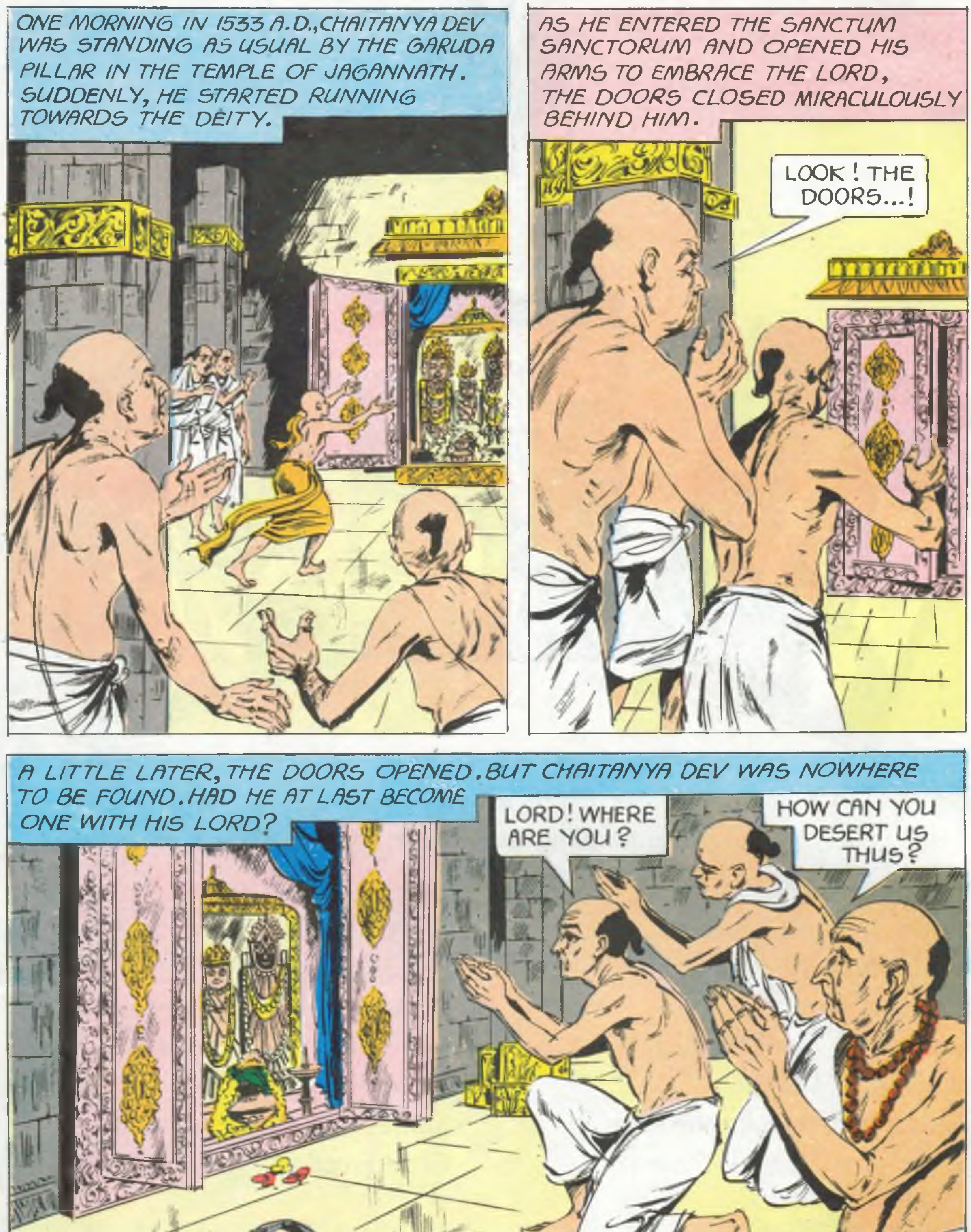


* RELIGIOUS MENDICANT.


YOU WILL BE THE UPHOLDER OF THE TRUE RELIGION IN THIS COUNTRY. I NAME YOU SANATAN. GO TO BRINDAVAN AND WRITE THE VAISHNAVA SHASTRA.
SANATAN HELPED TO SPREAD THE GOSPEL OF CHAITANYA DEV IN AND AROUND BRINDAVAN. ONE DAY–
THE LORD WANTS ME. I SHALL SET OUT IMMEDIATELY FOR PURI TO MEET HIM.
BUT ON THE WAY, HE CAUGHT A SKIN DISEASE. PUS OOZED FROM HIS SKIN, WHICH ITCHED MADDENINGLY.
HOW SHALL I MEET THE LORD IN THIS FILTHY STATE ? I WILL STAY WITH HARIDAS.
HARIDAS WAS A MUSLIM DEVOTEE OF CHAITANYA DEV. HE LIVED IN A HUT AT A DISTANCE FROM THE TEMPLE. CHAITANYA DEV CAME TO THE HUT IN SEARCH OF SANATAN.
SANATAN, COME OUT!
MY LORD! PLEASE DON'T. MY SORES WILL DEFILE YOUR PURE BODY.
BUT LO! THE MOMENT CHAITANYA RELEASED SANATAN FROM HIS EMBRACE –
MY SORES HAVE VANISHED! I AM CLEAN AGAIN!



FOR OVER EIGHTEEN YEARS, CHAITANYA DEV STAYED AT PURI. TOWARDS THE END OF THAT PERIOD HE WOULD OFTEN GO INTO TRANCES OR FORGET WHERE HE WAS. ONE DAY–
OH! HERE'S MY JAMUNA. I AM AT BRINDAVAN.
ONE OF HIS DISCIPLES NOTICED HIS UNUSUALLY LONG ABSENCE.
WHERE IS THE LORD? I'M WORRIED. LET'S GO OUT AND LOOK FOR HIM.
THE FIRST PLACE, THEY WENT TO, WAS THE SEA-SHORE. THERE–
HE WAS CAUGHT IN MY NET. IT'S STRANGE! BUT EVER SINCE I TOUCHED HIM, I AM NOT MYSELF. WHO IS HE?
HARE KRISHNA! HARE KRISHNA!
WHERE AM I?


ONE MORNING IN 1533 A.D., CHAITANYA DEV WAS STANDING AS USUAL BY THE GARUDA PILLAR IN THE TEMPLE OF JAGANNATH. SUDDENLY, HE STARTED RUNNING TOWARDS THE DEITY.
AS HE ENTERED THE SANCTUM SANCTORUM AND OPENED HIS ARMS TO EMBRACE THE LORD, THE DOORS CLOSED MIRACULOUSLY BEHIND HIM.
LOOK! THE DOORS...!
A LITTLE LATER, THE DOORS OPENED. BUT CHAITANYA DEV WAS NOWHERE TO BE FOUND. HAD HE AT LAST BECOME ONE WITH HIS LORD?
LORD! WHERE ARE YOU?
HOW CAN YOU DESERT US THUS?

AMAR CHITRA KATHA

Illustrated Classics From India

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

Vishwambhar or Chaitanya Mahaprabhu as he was later known, was born at a time when a very large area of northern and eastern India had come under Muslim rule. He showed the people a simple path to reach God, which later came to be known as Gaudiya Vaishnavism. Chaitanya not only stemmed the tide of conversion to Islam, but also provided a new life force to Hinduism.

Of the many ways by which devotees can reach Him, Krishna highlights this simple one in the Gita: "*Sarvadharman parityajya mamekam sharanam vraja*" (Forsaking all dogmas of religion, take refuge in me). This complete surrender to God, known to Vaishnavites as "Prapattivada", leads to Krishna or Rama (both incarnations of Lord Vishnu). To attain complete surrender, Chaitanya emphasised the *gopibhava*, the method of worship adopted by the damsels (*gopis*) of Vraja. They loved Krishna deeply, expecting nothing in return. Chaitanya also shunned casteism and preached that all men were equal. "Don't ask a Vaishnava what his caste is," said the Vaishnavites, "because he who worships Vishnu is His."

But even while preaching love and brotherhood, Chaitanya taught people not to yield to injustice and untruth. Perhaps the first ever non-cooperation movement (*satyagraha*, as Gandhiji later called it) was launched by Chaitanya. When the Kazi of Nabadwip forbade the singing of *bhajans* in the open, Chaitanya ordered peaceful mass singing, leading a peaceful procession of hundreds who sang all the way to the house of the Kazi. So strong was his influence, that the Kazi, it is said, was converted to Hinduism.

Editor: Anant Pai

Script: Kamala Chandrakant **Illustrations: Souren Roy** **Cover: Souren Roy**

Related Titles

Tulsidas • Mirabai • Soordas

Tales of Vishnu • Kalidas

ISBN 81-7508-059-0

9 788175 080591

IBH

INDIA BOOK HOUSE